made the acquaintance of August Wilhelm Schlegel, who afterwards became one of her intimates at Coppet. Thence she travelled to Vienna, where, in April, the news of her father’s dangerous illness and shortly of his death (April 8) reached her. She returned to Coppet, and found her­self its wealthy and independent mistress, but her sorrow for her father was deep and certainly sincere. She spent the summer at the chateau with a brilliant company ; in the autumn she journeyed to Italy accompanied by Schlegel and Sismondi, and there gathered the materials of her most famous work, *Corinne.* She returned in the summer of 1805, and spent nearly a year in writing *Corinne*; in 1806 she broke the decree of exile and lived for a time undisturbed near Paris. In 1807 *Corinne,* the first æsthetic romance not written in German, appeared. It is in fact, what it was described as being at the time of its appearance, “a picturesque tour couched in the form of a novel.” The publication was taken as a reminder of her existence, and the police of the empire sent her back to Coppet. She stayed there as usual for the summer, and then set out once more for Germany, visiting Mainz, Frankfort, Berlin, and Vienna. She was again at Coppet in the summer of 1808, and set to work at her book *De l'Allemagne.* It took her nearly the whole of the next two years, during which she did not travel much or far from her own house. She had bought property in America and thought of moving thither, but chance or fatality made her determine to publish *De l'Allemagne* in Paris. The submission to censorship which this entailed was sufficiently inconsistent, and she wrote to the emperor one of the unfortunate letters, at once undignified and provok­ing, of which she had the secret. A man less tyrannical or less mean-spirited than Napoleon would of course have let her alone, but Napoleon was Napoleon, and she perfectly well knew him. The reply to her letter was the condemna­tion of the whole edition of her book (ten thousand copies) as “not French,” and her own exile, not as before to a certain distance from Paris, but from France altogether. The act was unquestionably one of odious tyranny, but it is impossible not to ask why she had put herself within reach of it when her fortune enabled her to reside any­where and to publish what she pleased. She retired once more to Coppet, where she was not at first interfered with, and she found consolation in a young officer of Swiss origin named Rocca, twenty-three years her junior, whom she married privately in 1811. The intimacy of their relations could escape no one at Coppet, but the fact of the marriage was not certainly known till after her death.

The operations of the imperial police in regard to Madame de Stael are rather obscure. She was at first left undisturbed, but by degrees the chateau itself became taboo, and her visitors found themselves punished heavily. Mathieu de Montmorency and Madame Récamier were exiled for the crime of seeing her ; and she at last began to think of doing what she ought to have done years before and withdrawing herself entirely from Napoleon’s sphere. In the complete subjection of the Continent which preceded the Russian War this was not so easy as it would have been earlier, and she remained at home during the winter of 1811, writing and planning. On May 23 she left Coppet almost secretly, and journeyed by Bern, Innsbruck, and Salzburg to Vienna. There she obtained an Austrian passport to the frontier, and after some fears and trouble, receiving a Russian passport in Galicia, she at last escaped from the dungeon of Napo­leonic Europe, swearing never to return thither. It seemed likely that the proclamation of war between France and Russia, on June 22, would help her to keep the vow.

She journeyed slowly though Russia and Finland to

Sweden, making some stay at St Petersburg, spent the winter in Stockholm, and then set out for England. Here she received a brilliant reception and was much lionized during the season of 1813. She published *De l’Allemagne* (a book much more really remarkable than *Corinne)* in the autumn, was saddened by the death of her second son Albert, who had entered the Swedish army and fell in a duel brought on by gambling, under­took her *Considérations sur la Devolution Française,* and when Louis XVIII. had been restored returned to Paris. Both in the summer and in the winter of 1814 she visited Coppet, and was meanwhile a prominent figure in Parisian society. She was in Paris when the news of Napoleon’s landing arrived and at once fled to Coppet, but a singular story, much discussed, is current of her having approved Napoleon’s return. There is no direct evidence of it, but the conduct of her close ally Constant may be quoted in its support, and it is certain that she had no affection for the Bourbons. In October, after Waterloo, she set out for Italy, not only for the advantage of her own health but for that of her second husband, Rocca, who was dying of consumption. Her daughter married Duke Victor de Broglie on February 20, 1816, at Pisa, and became the wife and mother of French statesmen of distinction. The whole family returned to Coppet in June, and Byron now frequently visited Madame de Stael there. He had quizzed her a good deal in London, but liked her better in her own house, though even there he noticed her constant straining to be something different from herself. Despite her increasing ill-health she returned to Paris for the winter of 1816-17, and her salon was much frequented. But in March she is spoken of as “dying,” and she had already become confined to her room, if not to her bed. She died on the 14th of July, and Rocca survived her little more than six months. Nor was her eldest son long- lived. After editing a collected edition of his mother’s works he died at the age of thirty-seven in 1827.

Madame de Stael occupies a singular position in French liter­ature. The men of her own time exalted her to the skies, and the most extravagant estimates of her (as “ the greatest woman in literary history,” as the “foundress of the romantic movement,” as representing "ideas, ” while her contemporary Chateaubriand only represented words, colours, and images, and so forth) are to be found in those histories of literature which faithfully repeat second­hand and traditional opinions. On the other hand, it is acknow­ledged that she is now very little read. Sainte-Beuve, who professes a “ culte ” for her, and who has treated her at great length and with much indulgence ; M. Scherer, a compatriot and co-religionist, who is strongly prejudiced in her favour ; Doudan, a kind of literary retainer of her connexions,—all allow this, and any one who speaks with an intimate knowledge of current French literature must agree that since they spoke neglect of her has increased. No writer of such eminence is so rarely quoted ; none is so entirely destitute of that tribute of new and splendid editions which France pays to her favourite classics more lavishly than any other nation ; none is so seldom the subject of a literary *causerie.* The abundant docu­ments in the hands of her descendants, the families of Broglie and Haussonville, have indeed furnished material for papers recently, but these are almost wholly on the social aspect of Madame de Stael, not on her literary merit. Nor when the life and works come to be examined independently is the neglect seen to be without excuse. An ugly coquette, an old woman who made a ridiculous marriage, a blue-stocking who spent much of her time in pestering men of genius, and drawing from them sarcastic comment behind her back,—these things are not attractive. Her books are seen to be in large part merely clever reflexions of other people’s views, or views current at the time, and the famous “ideas” turn out to be chiefly the ideas of the books or the men with whom she was from time to time in contact. The sentimentality of her sentiment and the florid magniloquence of her style equally disgust the reader ; and, when it is suggested to him that the revolution of taste and manners hurts novels more than anything else, he is tempted to reply that it has not hurt *Don Quixote,* or *Gil Blas,* or *Robinson Crusoe,* or *Tom Jones,* or *Manon Lescaut, or The Antiquary,* and that if it has hurt *Corinne* it is simply because these are great books and *Corinne* is not a great book. There is truth in this, but to state it alone would be in the highest degree unfair. Madame de Stael’s faults are great ; her style is of an age not for